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Long history of education is flourishing at Kampong

KAMPONG, *FROM* 1G

year at nearly 100, who got a Ph.D. in ecological botany at the University of Chicago in the '20s," Sweeney said last week. "I was close to her. And my father was interested in the outdoors to a great extent. He knew many scientists."

In addition, plant scientists who knew David Fairchild, the century's premier plant explorer, kept visiting the Kampong after Fairchild's death in 1954. Kay Sweeney welcomed them all.

When she feared Fairchild was fading to a half-remembered legend, Sweeney wanted to keep alive his significance and work. So in 1984 she donated the house and property to the National Tropical Botanical Garden, a Congress-chartered garden that was headquartered in Hawaii and needed a presence in the continental United States.

That garden is focusing on research and education in tropical and subtropical botany, medicinal plants, plants of economic importance, and saving tropical rain forests, which are being diminished at a rate of hundreds of square miles a year.

Education is key

Bill Theobald has served for 16 years as director of the national garden, which also has three gardens and two reserves in Hawaii. For Theobald, saving tropical

TIM CHAPMAN / Miami Herald Staff

BIT OF HISTORY: The Kampong was purchased in 1964, when it was in danger of becoming a housing development. This is the view from the breezeway to Biscayne Bay.

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DAYS GONE BY: David Fairchild's barn and connecting study at the Kampong began life in 1892.

Dade's oldest oolite building to be museum

A gnarled and creepy old ficu tree has embraced the limeston wall with its roots, and the second floor study now exudes a mustines that is second nature to the tropics

But this little building, the olde oolite structure in Dade Count with its cypress walls and slidir glass windows, soon will be restore to its historic state of grace.

David Fairchild's study and ba at the Kampong began life in 189 It was the office of Dade's fir woman doctor, Eleanor Galt Si mons. A brass nameplate still is place.

A connecting barn was for Si mons' horse, on which she ma house calls. She also kept a boat trips to the Keys. Indians wo canoe down the Miami River to d at the end of the property and s treatment.

Louise Petrine, president of Villagers, a historic preservat group of 125 members, said building will become a museum reception area. The Villagers h pledged $30,000 to restore it.

"We want it done in time for meeting of the National Trust Historic Preservation in Octo 1992," Petrine said. "Work begin momentarily."

Fairchild added the second f to the building, and the original c he used may be loaned permane to the restoration by Fairchild T ical Garden. He also added a m in the adjoining concrete floor o shade house: "Push on, 1924."

GEORGIA TAS